

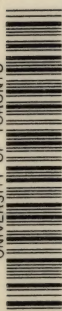
Tamph.  
Pol. Sci.  
GNT.  
J

---

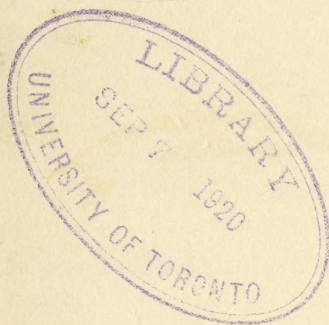
*An Editorial  
from the  
Saturday Evening Post*

---


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 01646721 9



*Entitled  
"Joyriding  
and  
Jaywalking"*



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2014

---

# *Joyriding and Jaywalking*

---

*An editorial reprinted from the Saturday Evening Post (Philadelphia)  
of November 29, 1919*

---

A GENTLEMAN who is trying to have his classification under the revenue law changed, with the pious purpose of saving some thousands of the taxes levied on his earnings, observed during the course of a recent discussion:—

“If the object of government is to make men, then I am in favor of government ownership.”

This quotation should be orchestrated for the tuba, with the cymbals crashing in on the last word, where the orator pounds the table.

**It is typical of this era of Big Talk and Small Sense, in which everyone is demanding shorter hours except the Big Talkers.**

They are still asking for "Just one moment more."

The simple and amply proven fact is that

**government ownership does not  
make men, and rarely makes money.**

**It makes weaklings, dependents,  
grafters, bureaucrats, autocrats and  
deficits.**

It is the first lesson in Socialism, and Socialism is the first lesson in Bolshevism, and Bolshevism is the last lesson in government. The class graduates from that into Anarchy.



**M**EN are not made by government, but government is made by men. For this reason it is imperfect, inefficient, wasteful and often dishonest. It reflects, and always will, the human weaknesses of those who compose and administer it.

If office and the power that goes with it change men, it is rarely for the better.



A good man is good in office, but he is at his best in private life. It is harder to prove an alibi there.

**Laws are seldom as just as they are intended to be; for they are only as strong as the men who enforce them.**

The difference between words and deeds finds its clearest example in them.

The conduct of the great departments of government, no matter how efficient the theoretical plan under which they are organized, is only as businesslike as the standards of their heads and personnel.



**T**HERE is nothing about a Washington job, beginning with the Presidency and working on down, that changes the character and the competency of the man who fills it, though it may and often does shackle him to outgrown tradition and outworn precedent.

**A bungling, boneheaded private citizen is not transmuted by election or appointment into a competent public servant, though he is often press-agented as one.**

All this, of course, is the obvious; but this is a time to state and restate the obvious, because almost every scheme of world-saving that is receiving consideration ignores the simple and proven facts of life and character. The obvious is too plain, too unexciting, too much like the well-settled middle years of matrimony for a world that wants jazz, hokum and soulmate economics.

Oftener than not, the obvious course is the right one.

But once that is admitted, a lot of lawyers and deep thinkers will be out of a job.



**G**OVERNMENT ownership is the college widow with whom they all take up when they begin to yearn for a sympathetic, an understanding com-

panion. The gossip of the campus, the scandals of her past, the flat failure of her attempts to land one of the long line of freshmen with honorable intentions who have fallen for her—are brushed aside as capitalistic lies by the pure young soul who sits beside her in the hammock while she plays the dear old songs on the ukulele.

Lots of people are simply holding hands with the past when they think they are looking ahead at the future.

**Government ownership cannot  
make good beside private business  
because it cannot develop the ablest  
type of executives, nor attract them  
from private business.**

Its final form—Communism—is predicated on supermen in office, and on a superstate that derives its administrators from some Jovian source of supply apart from and above the run of men.

It must depend on altruism instead of intelligent selfishness as a motive to at-



tract capable managers, and the supply of altruists who are willing to work twelve hours a day in order that the mass of men may lazy round in the sunshine is strictly limited; in fact, it has been found non-existent in Russia.

There seems to be a high degree both of selfishness and of intelligence on this subject.



**T**HE average voter, without stopping to take government apart to see what makes the wheels go round, why it loses time and sometimes stops altogether, ascribes godlike attributes and powers to it.

Bill Smith in private life round the corner must prove his claims to superiority by concrete and old-fashioned tests of his honesty and ability, but

**Bill Jones in Washington and Bill Joneski in Russia can tell him that they have been anointed with a new oil of wisdom, and he believes blindly.**



It is a great world delusion that the state, composed of fallible men, selected by and imposed on fallible men, possesses attributes of infallibility, virtues that are not inherent in the individual, abilities that in some occult way are brought out and perfected by office holding.

Rapidly developing corollaries to these propositions are:

*1—That the labor radical is more disinterested and less greedy for place and power than the politician.*

*2—That theorists are less avaricious and more competent to govern than men of practical affairs.*

*3—That in some unexplained way revolution changes natural law and human nature, and that Communists can bring commodities out of the air like rabbits from a conjurer's hat.*

*4—That altruism should move business and professional men and farmers to work for their own ruin in order to serve the purely selfish ends of labor.*

*5—That radicals, agitators and demagogues care less for power and money than the men they are trying to take it away from.*



**G**OVERNMENT ownership, Socialism and Communism are based on a belief that these self-evident falsities are truths. It is not intelligent for the radical labor class to think that all other classes will ruin themselves and then pitch in and work to make life soft for the reds.

Men believe many things because someone states them from a soap box or a rostrum, or puts them over in a pamphlet or a book.

**It never occurs to them to step  
around the corner and get the facts  
for themselves.**

Yet there is full information, fact not theory, on almost every subject under discussion, just round the corner.

Take the one that for fifty years has been the most argued over, most written

about of all—the liquor question. The mass of views, reviews and counterviews has befuddled everyone who has followed them in an attempt to form an opinion.

But any man of average intelligence could have seen the system in operation and have discovered all the good and the bad of it by spending an evening in his club, another at the neighborhood saloon, a third visiting Casey's place near the factory and the barrel house in the slums; by asking a few questions in the office, in the factory, of merchants, and of his friends.

Beneath all the books and befuddling arguments very few questions are more abstruse than that. Most of them will yield to the same simple personal treatment.

Government ownership is an open book to anyone who has been riding on the cars, doing business with the railroads and paying taxes and it has been a failure, though it has had the services of practical men whom it could not hope to retain under permanent government ownership.



**What we are headed for under a neat little plan like Plumb's staggers the imagination of those who will have to make up the deficits.**

We see no evidence that Plumb and his brotherhoods are super-altruists or that their standards of what's theirs and what's the public's are higher—except that they want to be farther above regulation—than those of the present owners.

We are all more or less government owned, and because we do not like the dose of it that we have already had, a part of the public is clamoring for more, on the theory that if one drink turns your stomach a dozen will restore its tone.

Some want it in one kind of bottle and some in another; one group believes in it homeopathically and another demands it in its allopathic and logical form—the genuine Russian vodka, with Lenine's name blown in the glass.

**G**OVERNMENT ownership is not only ownership of machinery, but it is also ownership of men.

**In its final form it is not only ownership of the machinery of production, but it is ownership of the individual, body and soul.**

It is folly to talk of ownership of production, in the sense of mastery, by all the people. Actual ownership will be vested in the men who are selected or who, as in Russia, select themselves to hold and to manage capital and industry.

From the very nature of the case this will be a small and autocratic group. Government will own all the capital—and they will be government.

There will be no appeal except to God or the counter-revolution, and these new-day altruists do not believe in God and are exceedingly careful about leaving fire-arms lying around loose with which the happy comrades might hurt themselves.

In any form of government we must delegate certain powers over our life, liberty and property to some very human men at Washington and elsewhere. The fewer and smaller those powers, consistent with equality of opportunity, the happier, freer and more prosperous the nation.

Under government ownership we gradually increase those powers, but every increase of them means a corresponding decrease of the individual's rights and liberty, until

**in the ideal state of the reds we are  
slaves of the machine, without  
individuality or opportunity.**



**T**HE choice is between individuals who are outside the government but whom the government can control, and individuals that are the government and beyond any control.

**A government may be ideal in theory, but it is finally no better than the men who dominate it.**

The weakest spots in all administrations have been some of the men who have been selected as advisers and executives. The weakest of the weak in the present Administration have been the theorists, uplifters and world-savers who are disciples of the new thought in politics.

But it would be these men, who have made such a sorry showing, and others who profess their delusions without believing in them, who would be our rulers in the new dawn, as they call this new twilight of civilization.

UNTIL a party goes before the country on a radical platform and returns an administration on it, there is no warrant for thinking that the American people want or expect men to hold office whose views are not in full harmony with their traditional principles of government.

Socialists will naturally lend the weight of their influence to forwarding socialistic doctrines even in an individualistic administration.

**The country emphatically repudiated Socialism at the last election.**

Government is not what a party stands for historically, not what it promised in its platform, but what its men in office are doing. It will be radical and socialistic to just the extent that the men in office are radical and socialistic, or compromising with socialistic doctrines.

One hesitates to discourage anything that may tend to bring factions together

and to compromise differences, but we doubt whether Big Talks by Big Names without power and authority to settle anything will get anywhere.

The things that need doing must be done by the Government, not by conferences, and there are hopeful signs of an awakening by the Administration and Congress to the need for forceful action.

The first conference, as was a foregone conclusion, blew up.

**Consideration of collective bargaining should have been preceded by a decision as to whether labor considers a bargain binding on anyone except the employer.**

But even before that question was taken up there should have been a clear-cut condemnation of those radical labor leaders who, when they are refused the unreasonable, the intolerable and the impossible, threaten strikes that are in effect—and, we are afraid, in intention—revolutionary.



**T**HESE preliminaries settled and red leadership and principles disavowed, labor would have had a sympathetic public behind it when its just grievances and claims came up for consideration.

**There never was a time in the history of the world when so much was being done by progressive and sympathetic employers all over the country to meet every fair demand for better wages and hours,**

and even to go labor one better by trying to improve living and working conditions beyond anything that has been asked.

It must, however, be borne in mind that many of these strikes cannot be settled by concessions; in fact, that concessions will simply stimulate new strikes, because they are not what they purport to be, efforts to obtain fair wages and just conditions, but moves planned by red leaders, seeking first the disorganization

and then the confiscation of industry. In short, the real objective of these leaders is Communism. These things, however, are squarely up to Congress, and it is its job to see that no department of the Government can offer lack of legislation as an excuse for inaction.



THE business of government is not to make men, but to give men a chance to make themselves. That was the spirit in which this Government was conceived, the theory on which it was founded. That was the practice that developed the American pioneer and that distinguished him from the European peasant.

**Individualism develops a breed of  
strong, self-reliant, progressive  
freemen.**

Socialism is simply a crutch for the half-free, the half-dependent. The demand for it in America has grown in

proportion as the number of unassimilated aliens has increased.

Educated to a belief in the superstate, always subservient to one, always dependent on one, they conceive government as omnipotent for good or evil. If it was evil in the hands of the old rulers, it must be good in the hands of the new ones.

And so they are easily led by the agitators, red radicals and demagogues, in and out of office, who are always seeking to increase their incomes and their power. Naturally the prospect of taking the capital of the country away from its present owners and handling it themselves delights these leaders.

**There are always plenty of people to join a mob, once it has been formed, and so the silly, as well as the sinister, are going along with the ignorant.**

The net of it all is that radicalism would exchange one set of capitalists who are at least practical and understand business



for another set who show no evidence that they know anything except the short cuts to the treasury.



**T**HE men who control capital, whether as private or government owners, are capitalists. When we have government ownership of everything and everybody, who is going to control government control?

Our altruist, who was seeking a reduction in his taxes, had plenty of intelligent selfishness when his private interests ran up against a government ruling that cost him money.

**Highbrows as well as lowbrows  
have a keen sense of their own  
property rights.**

Division is only desirable when it is in fact addition. Old John D. Rockefeller, their horrible example—who in truth is not above the suspicion of having more than his share—has done more for humanity with his Rockefeller Institute than all

the theories of all the reds, professional and parlor.

Incidentally, he gives to society more freely than any of these altruists that it has been our fortune to meet. They all put off the day of division and resent any attempt at direct action on their check books.

From what, then do they argue to their Utopias?

Not from their human nature nor from all human experience, but from some surface in their brains that is too soft to retain the impressions of common sense, but is always receptive to the counsels of vanity and cupidity.



**E**VERY hard-headed man—mechanic, farmer, clerk or merchant—who has studied the literature of the red movement knows that it is based on fallacious theories and deliberate, though often clever, misrepresentation of facts and figures.

Thousands are at work, recklessly spreading the lies, but even in the industries where the reds have been most active there has been little organized man-to-man effort to combat them with the truth in terms of cold facts and actual figures.

**You can deport liars, but you cannot deport their lies.**

**They can be killed only by the truth.**

